DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 386 710 CS 012 269

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TITLE Actions Speak Louder Than Words: Preparing Our Preservice and Inservice Teachers in the Way We Expect "Them" To Teach.
PUB DATE Apr 93
NOTE 21p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Reading Association (38th, San Antonio, TX, April 26-30, 1993).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Active Learning; Class Activities; Cooperative Learning; Course Descriptions; Critical Thinking; *Decision Making; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; Journal Writing; *Methods Courses; *Teacher Education
IDENTIFIERS Preservice Teachers

ABSTRACT

Drawn from a teacher-educator's experience in teaching a basic reading methods course and a Master's course for inservice teachers, this paper provides practical strategies for promoting active involvement, reflection, decision-making, and collaboration among preservice and inservice teachers. The paper first presents syllabi for the methods courses. Part 1 of the paper describes activities that are designed to provide students with opportunities to determine an instructionally sound course of action given a set of information, and focus on the process by which decisions are made. Sections in the first part discuss the assumptions that guiue this approach, class discussions, assessment, and modeling critical thinking strategies using an "I-Chart." Part 2 of the paper discusses using journals and response cards. Part 3 of the paper focuses on short-term and long-term collaboration and offers guidelines for a group project and a model lesson. Part 4 of the paper discusses ways to promote active involvement, including an application activity for preservice teachers, and a project for inservice teachers. Contains nine references. (RS)

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ED 386 710

Actions Speak Louder Than Words:
Preparing our Preservice and Inservice Teachers in the Way We Expect *Them* to Teach

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Prepared for the 38th annual meeting of the
International Reading Association
April 26-30, 1993
San Antonio, TX

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Introduction

The challenge of American reading instruction has grown. In addition to helping students to develop interest in reading, a repertoire of word recognition strategies, strategies for learning word meanings, and strategies for comprehension, teachers are now expected to develop students' abilities to think critically, to work collaboratively, and to make decisions responsibly. In order to be an effective reading teacher, today's teacher must, himself or herself, be an effective decision-maker, a critical thinker, a reflective practitioner, and a collaborator. If we, as teacher educators, are to facilitate the development of such characteristics in teachers, then we too must make changes in our teaching. The purpose of this session is to provide practical strategies for promoting active involvement, reflection, decision-making, and collaboration among preservice and inservice teachers. Although there is a separate section of this packet devoted to each of these four areas, you will notice that there is overlap. As indicated in diagram on page 4, these four areas are interconnected.

The Courses

The activities discussed in this packet are drawn from my experience teaching two courses, *ELEM 3331: The Teaching and Supervision of Elementary School Reading*, a basic reading methods course, for preservice teachers and *ELEM 5338: Teaching Reading in the Intermediate Grades* , a Master's course for inservice teachers. The number of students enrolled in each of these courses has ranged from 21 to 45, although the class is usually comprised of 30 students. Each course is taught in a 10 week quarter. The first portion of the syllabus for each course is found on the following pages. It should be noted that the required textbook for ELEM 3331 will be changed as of Fall, 1993 to: Graves, M. F., Watts, S. M., & Graves, B. B. (in press). *Handbook for Teaching Elementary Reading*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

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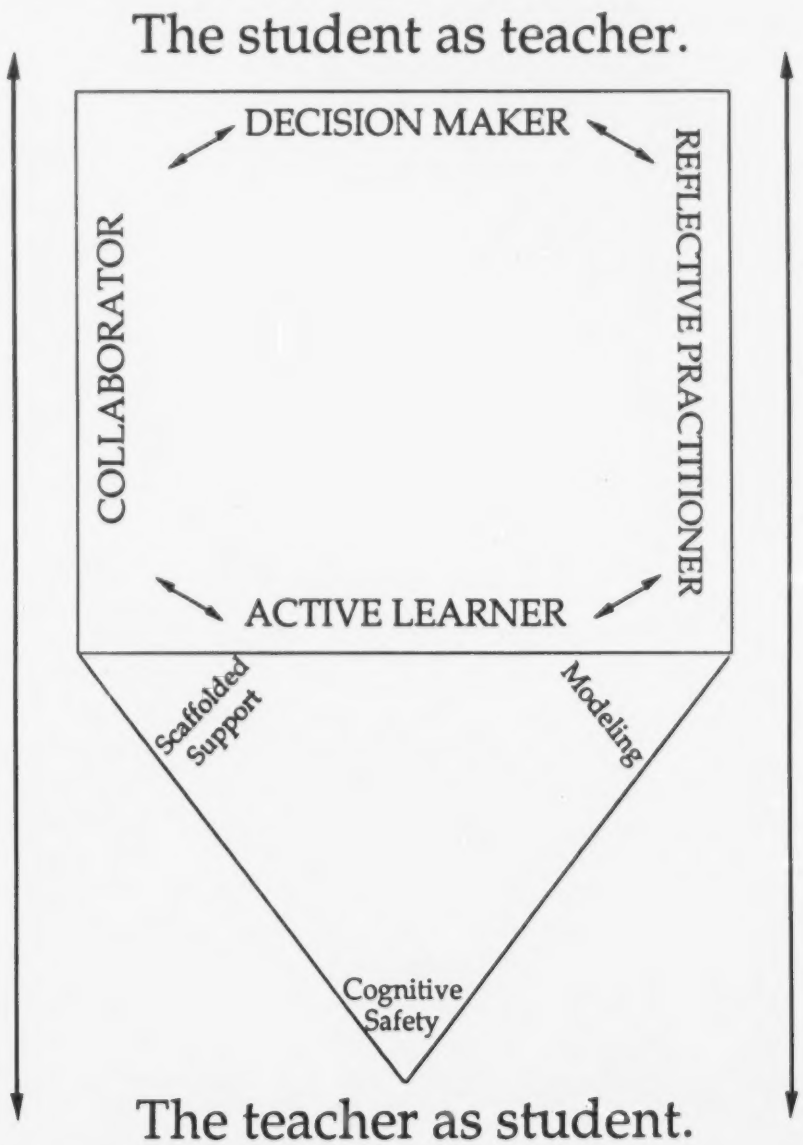
Basic Assumptions Underlying This Approach

1. *The major role of the teacher is that of decision maker.*
2. *Effective teachers are effective collaborators.*
3. *Effective teachers are reflective.*
4. *Learning requires active involvement on the part of the learner with that which is to be learned.*
5. *Fostering the aforementioned characteristics requires support in the form of modeling, scaffolding, and cognitive safety.*



COURSE FOR PRESERVICE TEACHERS
Teaching and Supervision of Reading
in the Elementary School
Winter, 1993
Professor Susan M. Watts

Required Text: Mason, Jana M., & Au, Kathryn, H. (1990). *Reading Instruction for Today* (2nd ed.). Harper Collins Publishers. Available at bookstore in Williamson Hall. [$41.25 New; @$31.00 Used]

Required Course Packet. Available at Copies on Campus, Coffman Memorial Union. Readings are listed in alphabetical order by author's last name. [$1.90]

Purpose of the Course

This course is designed to aid the prospective elementary classroom teacher in the development of his/her knowledge of theory and practice in the teaching of reading. As a result of taking this course, students will be aware of:

- Various definitions of reading and their implications for instruction.
- Several sources of information on reading instruction.
- Some of the materials available for instruction at the elementary level and be able to critically analyze these materials and make defensible decisions about the selection and use of materials.
- Some of the major research findings in the field of reading and their implications for instruction.
- Appropriate teaching methods for students of a variety of cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds.
- Ways to facilitate the development of reading readiness, word recognition skills, vocabulary knowledge, comprehension strategies, study skills, and interest in reading in elementary school students.
- Differences and similarities between early elementary grade reading programs and intermediate grade reading programs

COURSE FOR PRESERVICE TEACHERS
(continued)

Course Requirements

In addition to the assignments listed below, regular attendance and class participation is expected. All assignments must be typewritten and double-spaced unless otherwise specified. Each assignment listed below will be explained in class.

• Brief Assignments	As announced	15%
• Response Journal (May be handwritten. Loose leaf paper.)	Collected January 27 and February 24	15%
• Critique of Basal Reading Series Maximum Length = 5 pages)	Due January 25	15%
• Midterm Synthesis	Monday, February 8	20%
• Lesson Plan and Self-Made Materials (May be single spaced with double spacing between headings. Maximum Length = 2 pages)	Due February 22	15%
• Final Exam	To Be Announced	20%

COURSE FOR INSERVICE TEACHERS
ELEM 5338: Teaching Reading in the Intermediate Grades
Spring, 1993
Professor Susan M. Watts

Required Course Packet. Available at Copies on Campus, Coffman Memorial Union. (Readings are in alphabetical order by author's last name.) [$12.30]

Required Supplemental Packet. Available sometime after the first week of the quarter. [Est.: $10.00]

Purpose of the Course

This course is designed to aid the classroom teacher in the development of his/her knowledge of theory and practice in the teaching of reading to students in the upper elementary and middle grades. Specifically, we will explore reading instruction that reflects current theory and practice in the following areas:

- factors associated with reading success
- factors associated with reading difficulty

COURSE FOR PRESERVICE TEACHERS
(continued)

- similarities and differences between narrative and expository text
- the various contexts of reading instruction
- the role of literature in developmental and content area reading programs
- comprehension strategies
- ways to facilitate vocabulary growth
- assessment

Course Requirements

In addition to the assignments listed below, regular attendance and class participation is expected. All written assignments must be ***typewritten*** and ***double spaced*** unless otherwise specified. Where applicable, all references must follow APA style. Each assignment listed below will be explained in class.

Response Journal Entries (Ongoing; May be handwritten)	Due April 7, April 28, and May 26	30%
Book Sharing (Use specified format)	Due April 21	10%
Content Area Textbook Analysis (Maximum Length = 4 pages)	Due May 19	20%
Prospectus for Project/Paper	Due April 21 (or before) (Must be approved byApril 28)	10%
Project or Postion Paper	Due June 2	30%

COURSE FOR PRESERVICE TEACHERS
(continued)

Outline of Topics

Readings for each topic are listed on pages 4- 6. Assignments due on each date appear in italics.

Date	Topic
March 31	Course Overview
April 7	The Reading Process The Multiple Contexts of Reading Instruction Current Trends *Journal Entry Due*
April 14	Comprehension of Narrative Texts
April 21	Comprehension of Narrative Texts Literature for the Intermediate Grades *Book Sharing Due* *Prospectus Due*
April 28	Guest Presentation. Mary Anne Medo Literature Circles *Journal Entry Due*
May 5	Comprehension of Expository Texts Strategies and Study Skills
May 12	Meaning Vocabulary
May 19	Reading, Writing, and Reasoning Across the Curriculum *Content Area Text Analysis Due*
May 26	Assessment *Journal Entry Due*
June 2	Students Experiencing Difficulty Sharing of Papers/Projects *Final Project/Paper Due*
June 9	Sharing of Papers/Projects

Part I

DECISION-MAKING

The activities described in this section are designed to provide students with opportunities to determine an instructionally sound course of action given a set of information. It is closely tied to critical thinking and focuses on the process by which decisions are made, based on the assumption that instructional situations are variable and, therefore, the knowledge of "answers" is not as valuable as the knowledge of how to arrive at them.

A. Six Assumptions

I have already shared with you the assumptions that guide my approach to teacher education. I also have a set of assumptions about teaching reading that is closely tied to the assumptions I shared earlier. On the first or second day of class, I tell students that we each have certain assumptions about education and that these assumptions are usually reflected in our teaching behaviors. I tell them that one of their tasks during the course of the quarter is to identify and challenge some of their own assumptions. As a start, I ask them to think about some of my assumptions. With inservice teachers, I share them all on the first or the second day of class and encourage students to think about them as the quarter unfolds. Sometimes, I ask a directed question to which they must respond in their journals. With preservice teachers, I write one assumption on the board each day and ask students what they think I mean by it. I do not discuss the assumptions; I leave the discussion for them. Often, I ask them for a set of their own assumptions at the end of the course.

- There is no single best method of teaching reading.
- A reader is someone who can and does read.
- Reading is connected to writing, listening, and speaking.
- Classrooms are growing increasingly heterogeneous, culturally, linguistically, and educationally.
- The major role of the teacher is that of decision-maker and collaborator.
- Every student a teacher, every teacher a student.

B. Discussion

Class discussions are characterized by: (a) student-student interaction in addition to student-teacher interaction, (b) the expression and acceptance of multiple viewpoints, and (c) the flexibility of participants to change their position as new information is made available (Alvermann, 1987). I have found them to be effective for getting students to develop their own opinions on issues, getting them to raise questions about issues, and reinforcing the fact that each student is a valid decision maker. My main objective in facilitating discussions is to direct students' attention inward, toward their own ideas, rather than outward. Discussion is particularly valuable with inservice teachers, since they all bring different teaching experiences to the class. The following guidelines are based on the work of Alvermann (1987), Martin (1993), and myself.

COURSE FOR PRESERVICE TEACHERS
(continued)

GUIDELINES FOR FACILITATING LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Arrange chairs so that as many participants can see one another as possible.
2. Sit with the students.
3. Ask open ended questions with more than one or no "right answer".
4. Provide long wait times. If we are asking students to think, we must give them time to do so.
5. Make sure that students have enough prior knowledge to participate in a discussion.
6. Ask for elaboration on an idea. (e.g., Tell me more about that. Can you give me an example of that?"
7. Withhold judgment and allow for disagreement.
8. Summarize what you hear and encourage others to do so. (e.g., How does your idea relate to what Mark was just saying?)
9. Have students explain how they arrived at their idea.
10. Let a conversation develop. Don't give in to the urge to respond to everyone's response.

C. Assessment

When I first refer to the standard Midquarter Examination as the Midquarter Synthesis, my students think I am trying to be friendly. However, I use the term, as I explain to them, because that is in fact what an examination should be—an opportunity for them to synthesize all of the information they've gathered thus far and to figure out what questions they still have. It is a way for me to assess their progress, but it is also a way for them to assess their own progress. I have given several different types of syntheses ranging from multiple choice and short answer to a simulated teaching situation given as a take-home. While there is no doubt that essay activities require a great deal more of my time, the final course synthesis is always essay, since it requires a higher level of decision making than does a multiple choice synthesis.

Here are two examples of open ended activities given as take-home assignments.

COURSE FOR PRESERVICE TEACHERS
Excerpts from Final Course Synthesis
Due Wednesday, March 17, 1993
by 12 Noon

•Directions•

Answer each question below. Follow length guidelines for each question. Each question is worth 5 points.

Studying with a classmate or a group of classmates is recommended. The more thinkers, the more thoughts. However, be careful not to lose yourself in the identity of the group. (In other words, I don't expect 44 answers to a given question to look exactly alike!) Remember, essay questions don't lend themselves to a single "right answer.") Use study groups to generate and discuss ideas related to each question. The mental construction of responses should be done independently. I will be looking for the following as I evaluate your responses: *Clarity, Completeness, Evidence of Knowledge, Support/justification for statements (use examples and specifics).*

COURSE FOR PRESERVICE TEACHERS
(continued)

1. Compare and contrast effective reading instruction for first graders with effective reading instruction for sixth graders. List and explain 3 ways in which they are alike and 3 ways in which they are different.) Assume all students are reading on grade level. (1 page)
2. It is reading time in your fifth grade classroom. You have developed three groups based on student interests. Group A is reading about volcanoes, Group B is reading about the U.S. Constitution, and Group C is reading about a famous mathematician. The principal walks into your classroom and observes the students in Group A writing a group summary of what they've read so far about volcanoes to share with the class. She sees the students in Group B brainstorming a list of what they already know about the U.S. Constitution before reading the text. The students in Group C are quickly flipping through the pages of their text, scanning each page, before beginning to read. The principal asks you why Group A is writing during reading time, why Group B is talking during reading time, and why Group C is scanning rather than reading their passage. Furthermore, she wants to know why your students are reading expository text rather than narrative text during reading time. How would you respond? (1 page)
3. Select one of the following comprehension strategies: K-W-L, Reciprocal Teaching, Experience-Text-Relationship, Concept-Text-Application, Directed Reading-Thinking Activity. Write a lesson plan illustrating how your would use it with a group of students in your classroom. You may choose the size of the group. Follow the lesson plan format used in this block with the following additions:
   - Grade level
   - Size of group
   - Background (explanation of how this fits in to a larger unit)
   - Amount of previous experience students have with the strategy (11/2 pages)

COURSE FOR PRESERVICE TEACHERS
ELEM 5331: Teaching Reading in the Elementary School
Fall, 1992
Susan M. Watts

FINAL COURSE SYNTHESIS

Distributed: Monday, November 30, 1992
Written: Thursday, December 10, 1992
8 a.m. - 10 a.m.

You are beginning the second month of the school year in your fourth grade classroom. You have 16 students in your class who, for the most part, get along with one another. Here is some information about your school day and some of your students.

FINAL COURSE SYNTHESIS
(continued)

8:30 a.m.	Student Arrival
8:45 - 8:55 a.m.	Principal's Announcements
10:30 - 11:15 a.m.	Special Classes (Art, Physical Education, Music, etc.)/Preparation Time
12 - 12:30 p.m.	Lunch
2:45 p.m.	Dismissal

The following students receive a free breakfast which is served at 8:00 a.m.

Bob	Lowell
Eve	Nathan
Howard	Octavia

They usually finish eating early and play games in the cafeteria until 8:30 a.m.

The following students go out of the room for work with the Speech Pathologist on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:30 a.m. - 12 Noon.

Howard
Karen
Lowell

•Howard sees the school psychologist on Fridays from 9:00 - 9:45 a.m.

You have spent the first month of school getting to know your students and setting up classroom routines. Having looked at your students' records, conducted some informal reading inventories, and made note of your day-to-day observations, you have constructed a "State of the Class" chart (attached) for quick reference. (You have decided to update the chart at the end of each month.)

You work in a school district in which there are 8 global objectives for the fourth grade reading program. While each objective should be an integral part of instruction throughout the year, each month one of the objectives is highlighted for particular emphasis. (The first and last months of the school year are reserved for preparation and closure for the academic year, respectively.) The district allows teachers to choose the methods and materials with which to meet these objectives. As an indication of the degree to which students meet the objectives, teachers must select a work sample to be placed in each student's portfolio at the end of each month. These portfolios are examined by district personnel who decide whether students are making sufficient progress in each area throughout the year.

Your school district has mandated that the objective in reading for the second month of fourth grade is critical reading. It defines critical reading as follows:

(a) Looking at text from multiple perspectives or points of view.

(b) Evaluating or passing judgement on the events or episodes described in a text and being able to support these judgements.

FINAL COURSE SYNTHESIS
(continued)

Your Task

1. Decide how you will ***schedule your instructional time***. Make a daily schedule. (Your schedule may change from day to day if you wish.) Include relevant comments explaining why you have scheduled your time as you have.
2. Decide how your will ***group students for instruction.*** List your instructional groups. (Groups may change from day to day or within a day if you wish.) Include relevant comments explaining why you have grouped students as you have.
3. Decide how you will ***teach to the district objective*** during the course of one week. Write abbreviated lesson plans specifying the daily instructional objective, materials, and instructional activity (method) for each group. Indicate the time frame for each activity.
4. Decide how you will ***assess students on the district objective.*** Write a brief paragraph describing the work sample that you will put into each student's portfolio and what the student will be required to do in order to create that sample. Discuss any differences in the work samples required among your students, if there are any. Explain how your selected sample reflects one or both aspects of critical reading as defined by the district.

FINAL COURSE SYNTHESIS
(continued)

STATE OF THE CLASS CHART
September
ONLY A PORTION OF THIS CHART IS REPRODUCED HERE

Student	*General Reading Grade Level*	*Specific Areas of Development*					*Comments*
		Dec	Voc	Com	S.S.	Int	
Alicia	6.5	S	S	S	S	N	Avid recreational reader but bored with formal instruction. Does not stay on task and may distract others with off-task behavior. Has trouble getting along with the other students in the class.
Bob	6.0	S	S	S	S	S	Gets along with everyone. Enjoys reading instruction and works well with those who are not as far along as he is. Outgoing. Very popular.
Lowell	3.2	S	N	N	N	N	Enjoys playing with Howard during instruction.
Marissa	3.0	S	S	N	N	S	Follows instructions diligently. Exceptionally quiet. Has a hard time speaking in front of others.
Nathan	3.0	S	N	N	N	S	
Octavia	2.0	N	S	N	N	N	Octavia has very little confidence in herself. She gets very upset during instructional activities and often completes a lesson in tears.
Pedro	1.9	N	N	N	N	N	Does not like to read. His behavior is fine during other parts of the day, but during reading, he is difficult to manage. Gets very angry when he has to read. Family moved from Puerto Rico last year. ESL. Exceptional parental support.

KEY TO CHART

General Reading Grade Level: Estimated instructional levels based on all available information.

Specific Areas of Development

Dec: Decoding
Voc: Vocabulary
S.S.: Study Skills
Int: Interest in Reading
S: Strength
N: Needs improvement

D. Modeling Critical Thinking Strategies: The I-Chart

As noted in the diagram on page 4, modeling and scaffolding support the development of teachers who are actively involved in learning, collaborators, reflective practitioners, and decision makers. When it comes to critical thinking, I model specific strategies that my students might use with children. One of these is K-W-L (Ogle, 1986), which can be used to get students actively involved in bringing their prior knowledge of a topic to the surface before dealing with that topic through class activities and readings. Another approach I use is Hoffman's (1992), I-Chart. In this procedure, students generate questions about the topic of study, generate as many answers as they can to their own questions, then read, listen, and discuss to collect additional information and check the accuracy of their original answers. Like K-W-L, it motivates students to find answers to questions that are of concern the them. A unique feature of this approach is that it gives students a chance to compare answers from multiple sources by listing the resources along the left column of the chart. I like to add experience so that students can practice using themselves as a resource. When using this activity with preservice teachers, I need to help them to generate questions, since many of them lack enough information to generate many questions. Whereas inservice teachers' questions tend to be specific, preservice teahcers' questions tend to be very general. Usually, after reading and participating in class activities and lectures, they realize that there are more specific quesions that they need to ask, in order to get the information they seek. Here is part of a chart constructed by inservice teachers the week before we were to study students experiencing difficulty.

	GUIDING QUESTIONS				
TOPIC Students Experiencing Difficulty	1. How can you simplify their reading?	2. How do you motivate them?	3. How do you pinpoint their difficulties?	OTHER FACTS	NEW QUESTIONS
WHAT WE KNOW	Highlight headings, chunk material, match level of material with level of student	Get them actively involved, boost self esteem, praise often	Assess often, listen to oral reading, ask them what they're having trouble with		
SOURCES					
Allington					
Brozo					
Johnston					
Experience					
Discussion					
SUMMARY					

Part II

REFLECTION

I have used response journals with both preservice and inservice teachers. I have used a number of strategies to make them manageable for me. Two approaches are described below.

Journals

On the first day of class, I explain that writing is a medium of thought—a vehicle through which we can figure out what we think about ideas and what more we need to know to understand them fully or to make a judgment about them. I explain and provide students with the following questions to guide their journal responses. I encourage them to use these questions to motivate their writing each week. I collect journals three times during the quarter. For these three occasions, I provide a specific question that I want students to respond to. The specific questions as well as the more general questions listed below, provide a model for reflection. Sometimes, I also provide an example of a journal entry from a former student. Like any thing else, we cannot expect students to do that which we do not teach and support in our classes. Although reading and responding to journal entries is very time consuming, I find it less so when I have given a question to guide the response.

Questions to Guide Journal Responses

- What did I learn this week?
  (Understanding)
- How is it related to what I've learned or experienced in the past?
  (Reflection)
- How does it relate to what I'm learning in my other classes?
  (Synthesis)
- How does it relate to what I'm observing/doing in my practicum situation?
  (Synthesis and Application)
- How does it relate to what I will do in my own classroom?
  (Application)
- What surprises me, worries me, or excites me about what I'm learning?
  (Affect)
- What questions do I have? What more would I like to know?
  (Understanding)
- What don't I understand fully?
  (Understanding)

Response Cards

Another technique that fosters reflection without being too time intensive on my part if the use of response cards. I ask students to respond a given open-ended question about the reading(s) on a 5 x 8 inch index card. The limited space encourages students to consolidate their thoughts which requires a high level of thinking. I collect these each week or every other week and it takes me about 11/2 hours to read and respond to 30. I feel the time is well spent, since I get to know each student better and can tailor my instruction to the overall needs of the class.

Other Activities

Often, I give an open-ended survey/questionnaire to students as a homework assignment early in the quarter. On it, I ask them to provide a profile of themselves as an educator. At the end of the course, I often ask them to do the following:

ELEM 5338
Teaching Reading in the Intermediate Grades
FINAL WRITING ASSIGNMENT
Take Home

Please respond to the following in essay form using 1-3 typewritten pages or 3-5 handwritten pages. The purpose of this assignment is to allow you a forum for "wrapping up the course" for yourself and for sharing with me your progress as a reading teacher as it relates to the content of this course.

I MUST **receive** this assignment no later than 7 p.m. on Monday, March 15, or it will **not** be counted toward your final course grade (i.e., you will receive no credit for having completed it).

- Where are you in your journey as a teacher of reading? Reflect on your experiences (as a teacher and as a student) and discuss ways in which you've grown and directions in which you feel yourself moving. Include in this discussion one or more of the topics covered in this course. (You may discuss several topics or discuss one in depth.) In other words, Where have you been?, Where are you now?, and Where are you going? How have one or more of the topics or themes of this course impacted on your journey. Share with me what you've learned within the context of YOUR professional life.

Part III

COLLABORATION

As classrooms grow increasingly diverse, it is increasingly necessary for teachers to work as teams in meeting the needs of students. Therefore, I devote a great deal of time to collaboration within my courses. I usually begin by asking students to identify characteristics of successful working groups and to identify characteristics of unsuccessful working groups. Their comments usually mirror guidelines promoted by Johnson, Johnson, and Smith (1991) and are listed below. Further, on the first day of class, I make sure that students introduce themselves to one another in small groups. When ever they are assigned to a new group, they begin with a short introduction period. This helps students achieve a personal comfort level that fosters successful group work.

A. Promoting Success in Groups

1. **Clarity of task. Make sure the task is clear to all members of all groups, both in terms of what the group is to "do" and how the group is to do it. In order to be most efficient, groups should not waste time figuring out how to organize themselves or what it is that they are supposed to produce or experience.**

2. **Monitoring. Walk around and sit in with groups to answer questions and make sure that directions are clear.**
3. **Acceptance of all ideas. Model acceptance of multiple viewpoints during large group discussions so that small groups are a risk-free environment for divergent thinking.**
4. **Felt Efficacy of Each Group Member. Arrange groups so that each member not only feels comfortable contributing ideas but, in fact, has ideas to contribute.**
5. **Equal Participation. Make sure participation among group members is fairly equally distributed. Assign one person in each group the responsibility of encouraging quiet members to share by directly asking for their opinion every now and then.**
6. **Time limits. Set time limits for each of the tasks the groups are to engage in. Each group can assign someone the role of time-keeper to keep the group on task. If ideas are to be shared, you might want each group to assign a recorder and a speaker, as well.**

B. An Example of Short-Term Collaboration

Often, I group students for brief in-class activities. For example, I might give each of several groups of preservice teachers a problem to work on, then have them share their solutions with the rest of the class. Here are two sample problems:

- You are having a conference with the parent of one of your kindergartners, Ms. Jones. You have established a positive working relationship with Ms. Jones who is a single parent. Ms. Jones expresses desire to help her daughter in her journey toward reading, but admits, with embarrassment, that she can barely read herself. What advice would you give this parent for helping her daughter?
- Jerry is a student in your fifth grade class. He decodes words at a ninth grade level, but comprehends at a second grade level. He enjoys reading aloud and feels that he is a good reader, because of his decoding ability. When asked to retell a fifth grade level story, he stares blankly and seems to have no idea of what he's just read. When asked specific questions about characters and sequence of events, he is equally lost. Describe a plan for meeting Jerry's needs.

C. An Example of Long-Term Collaboration

With inservice teachers, I often establish groups to work on a long-term project. I begin by gathering their ideas about the best way to group them (e.g., by grade level currently teaching, by interest, by area in which they live, by school district in which they teach) and the optimal amount of in-class time devoted to group work. I consider their ideas along with my instructional objectives. Once students are grouped, I provide them with fairly explicit instructions regarding their task, as indicated below. I usually model the steps before launching them off on their own.

Guidelines for Group Project & Model Lesson

<u>Requirements for Group Project</u>

- Must be integrated across *at least* three curricular areas—one of which must be Reading/Language Arts.

- Must be thematic—that is all lessons must bear some relationship to a unifying theme.
- Must be designed to meet the needs of a "typical" class which includes a range of achievement levels and at least three students that have been identified as having a learning difficulty of some sort.
- Must be presented in such a way that it is clear that the above requirements have been met.

Written Component - The group will submit an instructional unit that includes individual lesson plans as well as an Introduction, a Summary, and a List of Additional Resources.

The *Introduction* explains the broad objectives of the unit and a description of how the individual lessons fit together to meet the broad objective, a graphic organizer for the unit, and any additional information decided upon by the group.

The *Summary* ties up any loose ends, discusses what the teacher has had the opportunity to learn as a result of implementing the unit, discusses what your group has learned as a result of designing the unit, and suggests any potential future directions for your hypothetical class for which the unit was designed.
The *List of Additional Resources* lists any resources that might be used in implementing or extending the unit (whether they were utilized by your group or not).

Shared Component - The group will present an overview of the unit, highlighting its most important features and showing more detailed examples of specific lessons where appropriate.
Grading - A group grade will be given for the instructional unit as a whole (15 points) and individual grades will be give for individual components (15 points). The total project is worth 30 points.

Requirements for Model Lesson

- Must be designed to meet the needs of a "typical" class which includes a range of achievement levels and at least three students that have been identified as having a learning difficulty of some sort.

Written Component - The group will submit ***two copies*** of a lesson plan/description that clearly states the objectives of the lesson, the procedures to be followed, and any additional information decided upon by the group. (I will provide copies of each lesson plan for the class.)

Shared Components - The group will begin with a 2 or 3 minute overview of the lesson. The remainder of the time will be spend modeling the lesson with members of the class acting as "students" and group members rotating the role of "the teacher" among them. (It will probably be necessary to select one portion of the lesson to demonstrate and "talk us through" the rest.)
Grading - A group grade will be given based on the written lesson plan and the demonstration (15 points).

Part IV

ACTIVE LEARNING

For me, active learning requires students to interact with the material to be learned. The nature of this interaction can be highly varied, ranging from thinking about it to applying it.

A. Four Quick Ways to Promote Active Involvement

1. **Ask a question and give students one minute to think of their answer.**
2. **Repeat #1, above, then have each student share his or her answer with the person next to him or her. Then have student who wish to share with the class as a whole. (Think-Pair-Share)**
3. **Survey the class. Ask a question, provide two or three answers, and ask how many agree with each answer.**
4. **Have students take a minute to write an answer, a thought, or a question related to the topic in their notebook.**

B. An Application Activity for Preservice Teachers

By giving each task to a different group and having groups share their results, students act as models for their peers (Jigsaw). The activities listed below were used to initiate a discussion of Emergent Literacy and Beginning Reading Instruction. The "lecture material was introduced within the context of these group activities.

- Using chart paper and markers, write a "Morning Message" to your kindergarten class Find a spot on the wall to post it for all to see! Pick someone to read it to the class.
- Pick one person to be the teacher. The rest of you are six years old. Choose any song you wish and sing it for the class. The teacher should lead this Sing-Along!
- Pretend that you are teaching first grade. Each day, you spend 10 minutes in the morning sharing books that you think your students might like to look at during Free Reading time later in the day. Begin each "Book Talk" by showing the cover of the book and reading the title, author, and illustrator. Explain the meaning of any words in the title that you think may be difficult for your students. Then share a 2 or 3 page excerpt with the hope of piquing students' curiosity, so they will later look at the books. Each group member should share one book.
- Pretend you are second graders. Make an original book. Use any materials you find in the classroom or in your book bags. You will share this with the class.
- Read this big book to the class. Pretend we are a group of kindergartners and you are the teacher. Divide the story so that each of you gets a change to read and share it with us.

C. A Project for Inservice Teachers

One of the best ways to get students actively involved in their own learning (and to, therefore, take ownership of their learning), is to let them decide what it is they will learn. I accomplish this with projects. Each student plans and implements a project of his or her choice. The guidelines below explain the nature of the project (or paper).

• Project

The purpose of this activity is for you to decide for yourself what is important for you to learn at this point in your career and to provide a means with which you can learn it! You must submit a 1 page prospectus describing:

I. What your project will entail.

II. A rationale for your chosen project.

III. The format of your finished project.

It is up to you to decide how best to present your project in writing. This project will, most likely, be related to a change you wish to make in your classroom. You may work with a partner if you wish. (References must APA style.)

Position Paper

• Position Paper

The purpose of this assignment is for you to identify, analyze, and formulate a position on an issue that is critical and controversial to you and/or in the field of reading at large. Your 1 page prospectus will comprise the introduction to your paper, as outlined below. Your paper must include the following:

I. Introduction (1 page)

A. Definition of topic—What is your topic and how are you defining it for purposes of this paper? Will you treat all aspects of the topic or one or two specific aspects?

B. Significance of topic/Rationale—Justify your topic selection by explaining why it is critical to you and/or in the field of reading.

C. Organization of Paper—What will you discuss in your paper and how will your discussion be organized?

II. Status of Knowledge on the Topic and The Debate (3-4 pages)

Summarize the results of your literature review providing a clear description of the issues surrounding your topic, the controversy, and the reason for the controversy.

III. Position (5 pages)

Detail your views on the topic and your position in the controversy. Provide reasons for your views based on the content of this course, your literature review, your experiences with children, and/or any other sources that have influenced your position. Support your argument!

IV. References - Follow APA style.

Resources

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